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10/698,511

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Michel A. Riou

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EXAMINER

FIDLER, SHELBY LEE

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2861

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DELIVERY MODE

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/698,511

Applicant(s)

RIOU ET AL.

Examiner

Shelby Fidler

Art Unit

2861

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 June 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14, 17-22 and 27-43 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14, 17-22, 27-43 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All. b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

Applicant's request for reconsideration of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the claim recites a single means claim i.e., where a means recitation does not appear in combination with another recited element of means, therefore is subject to an undue breadth rejection. See MPEP § 2164.08(a).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 6, 10, 12, 13, 18-20, 22, 27-30, 33-36, 39, and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brinkly (US 6397488 B1) in view of Nakazawa et al. (US 6281911 B1).

Regarding claim 1:

Brinkly discloses a printing system comprising:

an ink dispenser (print engine 22) configured to deposit ink upon a print medium (col. 3, lines 63-66); and

a condenser (part of accumulator 102) configured to condense vapor into a condensate (col. 5, lines 45-48);

a receptacle (vessel 116) configured to collect the condensate (col. 5, lines 45-48), wherein the receptacle includes:

an inlet through which the condensate flows into the receptacle (col. 5, lines 45-48 and Fig. 2).

Brinkly does not expressly disclose that the receptacle is perforated to permit a portion of the condensate to evaporate, wherein the receptacle is removably coupled to a remainder of the system, or that the receptacle includes a closing portion that is movable between an inlet open position and an inlet closing position.

However, Nakazawa et al. disclose a receptacle (ink cartridge 2) that is perforated to permit a portion of waste ink to evaporate (col. 10, lines 33-48), wherein the receptacle is removably coupled to a remainder of the system (col. 12, lines 6-10), and that the receptacle includes a closing portion (take-in port rubber 522) that is movable between an inlet open position and an inlet closing position (col. 5, lines 53-58 and Fig. 5).

Therefore, at the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to utilize the cartridge disclosed by Nakazawa et al. into Brinkly's invention. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Nakazawa et al., is to provide an ink cartridge with a waste ink absorbing function that can be recycled simply and easily (col. 2, lines 45-47).

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Regarding claim 6:

Nakazawa et al. also disclose that the printing system comprises means (take-in port rubber 522) for automatically moving the closing portion to the inlet closing position when the receptacle is disconnected from the remainder of the printing system (col. 12, lines 1-22 and Fig. 5).

Regarding claim 10:

Brinkly also discloses a blower (vacuum 88) configured to move the vapor along the condenser (col. 5, lines 43-45 and Fig. 2).

Regarding claim 12:

Nakazawa et al. also disclose that the receptacle includes a waste ink-absorbing material (absorbing member 20) within the receptacle (Fig. 1).

Regarding claim 13:

Nakazawa et al. also disclose that the waste-ink absorbing material (20) is removable from the receptacle (e.g. col. 13, lines 47-57).

Regarding claim 18:

Brinkly also disclose that the ink dispenser includes an inkjet printhead (col. 3, lines 63-66).

Regarding claim 19:

Brinkly also disclose a media handling system (print media handling system 24) configured to transport individual sheets of material relative to the ink dispenser (col. 4, lines 29-35).

Regarding claim 20:

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Brinkly also disclose that the media handling system (24) is configured to handle sheets of material having a minor dimension that is less than 9 inches (col. 4, lines 34-37 and Fig. 1).

Regarding claim 22:

Brinkly also disclose a heater (heating device 60) that is configured to heat the deposited ink (col. 4, lines 46-56), whereby vapor is produced (col. 5, lines 53-55).

Regarding claim 27:

Brinkly discloses a printing system comprising;
means (print engine 22) for depositing ink upon a print medium (col. 3, lines 63-66);
means (accumulator 102) for condensing vapor to form a condensate (col. 5, lines 45-48);
and
means (vessel 116) for storing the condensate (col. 5, lines 45-48).

Brinkly does not expressly disclose that the means for storing includes an inlet and means for automatically occluding the inlet when disconnected from a remainder of the printing system.

However, Nakazawa et al. disclose means for storing (ink cartridge 2) that includes an inlet (insertion hole 48a) and means (take-in port rubber 522) for automatically occluding the inlet when disconnected from a remainder of the printing system (col. 12, lines 1-28 and Fig. 5).

Therefore, at the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to utilize the cartridge disclosed by Nakazawa et al. into Brinkly's invention. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Nakazawa et al., is to provide an ink cartridge with a waste ink absorbing function that can be recycled simply and easily (col. 2, lines 45-47).

Regarding claim 28:

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Nakazawa et al. also disclose means (ventilation hole 60) for evaporating a portion of the condensate while the condensate is being stored (col. 10, lines 33-48).

Regarding claim 29:

Brinkly also discloses means (heating device 60) for heating the deposited ink (col. 4, lines 46-56), whereby vapor is formed (col. 5, lines 53-55).

Regarding claim 30:

Brinkly discloses a method of printing ink upon a medium, the method comprising:

depositing ink upon the medium (col. 3, lines 63-66);

heating the deposited ink to create a vapor (col. 5, lines 53-55); and

condensing the vapor into a condensate (col. 5, lines 45-48); and

collecting at least a portion of the condensate into a first receptacle (col. 5, lines 45-48).

Brinkly does not expressly disclose the step of absorbing the portion of condensate into a first absorption member within the first receptacle.

However, Nakazawa et al. disclose the step of absorbing at least a portion of waste liquid into a first absorption member (col. 6, lines 19-23) within a first receptacle (Fig. 6).

Therefore, at the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to utilize the cartridge disclosed by Nakazawa et al. into Brinkly's invention so as to perform the step of absorbing the condensate. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Nakazawa et al., is to provide an ink cartridge with a waste ink absorbing function that can be recycled simply and easily (col. 2, lines 45-47).

Regarding claim 33:

Brinkly also discloses the step of evaporating a portion of the condensate within the first receptacle (col. 5, lines 45-48).

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Regarding claim 34:

Nakazawa et al. also disclose the step of replacing the first absorption member with a second absorption member (col. 13, lines 47-57).

Regarding claim 35:

Nakazawa et al. also disclose the step of replacing the first receptacle with a second receptacle when at least a portion of the first receptacle is filled with condensate (col. 5, lines 48-50 and col. 4, lines 50-55).

Regarding claim 36:

Nakazawa et al. also disclose the step of sending the first receptacle, at least partially filled with condensate, to a collection entity for recycling or disposal of the condensate (col. 4, lines 50-55).

Regarding claim 39:

Brinkly also discloses the step of ejecting ink from an inkjet printhead upon the medium (col. 3, lines 63-66 and Fig. 2).

Regarding claim 43:

Brinkly also disclose a conduit that is configured to direct all the condensate from the condenser to the receptacle (Fig. 2).

Claims 2-4, 7-9, 21, 31, and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al., as applied to claims 1, 19, and 30 above, and further in view of Anderson et al. (US 6176563 B1).

Regarding claim 2:

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Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. disclose all claimed limitations except that the condenser includes:

a conduit having a conduit interior; and

a coolant source connected to the conduit and configured to supply coolant into the conduit interior at a temperature so as to condense the vapor along the conduit.

However, Anderson et al. disclose a printing system comprising a condenser (condensation element 126) that includes:

a conduit having a conduit interior (dye effluent duct 130);

a coolant source connected to the conduit and configured to supply coolant into the conduit interior (col. 5, lines 15-16) at a temperature so as to condense vapor along the conduit (col. 5, lines 20-26).

Therefore, at the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to utilize the condenser of Anderson et al. in place of Brinkly's condenser to achieve the predictable result of condensing printing composition vapors, since both Brinkly and Anderson et al. teach different types of condensers. *KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc.*, 82 USPQ2d 1385 (2007).

Regarding claim 3:

Anderson et al. also disclose that the coolant source is configured to supply a liquid (cooling fluid) at a temperature so as to condense the vapor along the conduit (col. 5, lines 15-18).

Regarding claim 4:

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Anderson et al. also disclose that the coolant source is configured to supply a gas (cooling fluid) at a temperature so as to condense the vapor along the conduit (col. 5, lines 15-18).

Regarding claim 7:

Anderson et al. also disclose that the coolant source includes:

a pump (pump 620, Fig. 6) configured to move fluid (col. 6, lines 64-67);

a cooling device (compressor 706, Fig. 6) configured to cool the fluid to the temperature (col. 5, lines 51-56).

Regarding claim 8:

Anderson et al. also disclose that the cooling device includes a compressor (compressor 706, col. 5, lines 51-56).

Regarding claim 9:

Anderson et al. also disclose that the condenser includes a thermoelectric module (col. 5, lines 33-34).

Regarding claim 21:

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. disclose all claimed limitations except that the media handling system is configured to stack the individual printed upon sheets.

However, Anderson et al. disclose a media handling system that is configured to stack individual printed upon sheets (col. 6, lines 4-5 and Fig. 4).

Therefore, at the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to utilize an output tray, such as disclosed by Anderson et al., into the invention of Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Anderson et al., is to store the completed sheets (col. 6, lines 4-5).

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Regarding claim 31:

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. disclose all claimed limitations except the step of circulating a fluid through a thermally conductive conduit having a condensing surface to cool the condensing surface to a temperature to condense the vapor.

However, Anderson et al. disclose circulating a fluid through a thermally conductive conduit having a condensing surface to cool the condensing surface to a temperature to condense the vapor (col. 5, lines 15-27).

At the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to perform the step of circulating a fluid through a conduit, such as taught by Anderson et al., into the invention of Brinkly modified by Nakazawa et al. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Anderson et al., is to transfer heat from the ambient air to the fluid (col. 3, lines 12-15).

Regarding claim 32:

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. disclose all claimed limitations except the step of powering a thermoelectric module having a cool portion and a hot portion, wherein the cool portion is thermally coupled to a condensing surface along which the vapor is condensed.

However, Anderson et al. disclose powering a thermoelectric module (col. 5, line 33-36) having a cool portion (element 330, Fig. 3) and a hot portion (element 328, Fig. 3), wherein the cool portion is thermally coupled to a condensing surface along which the vapor is condensed (col. 5, lines 37-40).

At the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to perform the step of powering a thermoelectric module, such as taught by Anderson et al., into the invention of Brinkly modified by Nakazawa et al. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Anderson et al., is to transfer heat from the ambient air to the fluid (col. 3, lines 12-15).

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. and Anderson et al., as applied to claim 2 above, and further in view of Shin et al. (US 6085055).

Regarding claim 5:

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. and Anderson et al. disclose all claimed limitations except that the condenser includes a fin that is thermally coupled to the conduit.

However, Shin et al. disclose a printing system comprising a condenser (condensing means 150) that includes a fin (fins 151) that is thermally coupled to a conduit (col. 3, lines 23-30 and Fig. 3).

Therefore, at the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to utilize a fin that is thermally coupled to the conduit, such as disclosed by Shin et al., into the invention of Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. and Anderson et al. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Shin et al., is to cool and liquefy the vapors (col. 3, lines 23-25).

Claims 11 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al., as applied to claims 10 and 30 above, and further in view of Sakai (US 6512900 B2).

Regarding claim 11:

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. disclose all claimed limitations except that the printing system includes:

a duct proximate the condenser and having an exhaust opening; and

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a filter between the condenser and the exhaust opening.

However, Sakai discloses a printing system including:

a duct that is proximate a condenser (liquefying device 11) and having an exhaust opening (col. 4, lines 13-18); and

a filter (filter 12) that is between the condenser and the exhaust opening (Fig. 1).

Therefore, at the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to utilize the exhaust and filter, such as disclosed by Sakai, into the invention of Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Sakai, is to absorb and remove any unliquified solvent vapors from the printing system (col. 4, lines 13-18).

Regarding claim 38:

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. disclose all the limitations of claim 30, and Brinkly also discloses the step of directing the vapors across a condensing surface (Fig. 2).

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. do not expressly disclose the step of directed the vapors through a filter.

However, Sakai discloses the step of directing vapors through a filter (col. 4, lines 13-18).

Therefore, at the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to perform the step of directing the vapors through a filter, such as taught by Sakai, into the invention of Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Sakai, is to absorb and remove any unliquified solvent vapors from the printing system (col. 4, lines 13-18).

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Claim 14 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al., as applied to claim 12 above, and further in view of Hirabayashi et al. (US 6203138 B1).

Regarding claim 14:

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. expressly disclose all claimed limitations except that the waste ink-absorbing material comprises foam.

However, Hirabayashi et al. disclose a waste ink receptacle (waste ink pack 17) that includes a condensate-absorbing material (ink absorption member 16) made of foam (col. 6, lines 22-24).

At the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to utilize a foam absorbent, such as disclosed by Hirabayashi et al., into the invention of Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. The motivation for doing so, as taught by Hirabayashi et al., is to absorb and hold the waste so as to prevent it from leaking outside (col. 7, lines 43-45).

Claims 17 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al., as applied to claims 1 and 30 above, and further in view of Igval et al. (US 6357854 B1).

Regarding claim 17:

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. disclose all claimed limitations except that the receptacle includes a fill indicator to indicate a volume of the receptacle that is filled with condensate.

However, Igval et al. disclose that it is known to provide a receptacle that includes a fill indicator configured to indicate a volume of the receptacle that is filled with waste liquid (col. 2, lines 4-10).

At the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to utilize a fill indicator in the receptacle, such as disclosed by Igval et al., into the invention of Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Igval, is to monitor the amount of waste ink in the tank to prevent overflows (col. 2, lines 4-6).

Regarding claim 37:

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. disclose all claimed limitations except the step of sensing an amount of condensate within the first receptacle.

However, Igval et al. disclose the step of sensing an amount of waste liquid within a receptacle is known (col. 2, lines 4-10).

At the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to perform the step of sensing an amount of condensate, such as taught by Igval et al., into the invention of Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Igval, is to monitor the amount of waste ink in the tank to prevent overflows (col. 2, lines 4-6).

Claims 40 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. and Anderson et al., as applied to claim 9 above, and further in view of Azar (US 6269002 B1).

Regarding claim 40:

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Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. and Anderson et al. disclose all claimed limitations except that the condenser includes a plurality of fins that are thermally coupled to the thermoelectric module.

However, Azar discloses a plurality of fins (plate fins 101) that are thermally coupled to a heat producing electronic component (col. 1, lines 8-13 and Figs. 10A and 10B).

Therefore, at the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to utilize a plurality of fins that are thermally coupled to the thermoelectric module of the invention of Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. and Anderson et al. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Azar, is to effectively dissipate heat so that circuitry performance is optimized and circuit life is prolonged (col. 1, lines 8-21).

Regarding claim 41:

Azar also discloses that the plurality of fins (101) converge from an inlet side (top of Fig. 10A), and have a first dimension (Fig. 10A), to an outlet side (bottom of Fig. 10A), and have a second smaller dimension (Fig. 10B).

Claim 42 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al., as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Anderson et al. (US 6176563 B1) and Azar (US 6269002 B1).

Regarding claim 42:

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. disclose all claimed limitations except that the condenser includes a plurality of fins converging from an inlet side proximate the ink dispenser and having a first dimension to an outlet side distant the ink dispenser and having a second smaller dimension.

However, Anderson et al. disclose a condenser (condenser 126) comprising a thermoelectric module (peltier device 326).

Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. and Anderson et al. do not expressly disclose a plurality of fins converging from an inlet side proximate the ink dispenser and having a first dimension to an outlet side distant the ink dispenser and having a second smaller dimension.

However, Azar discloses a plurality of fins (101) that are thermally coupled to a heat producing electronic component (col. 1, lines 8-13 and Figs. 10A and 10B), wherein the fins converge from an inlet side (top of Fig. 10A), and have a first dimension (Fig. 10A), to an outlet side (bottom of Fig. 10A), and have a second smaller dimension (Fig. 10B).

Therefore, at the time of invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to utilize the thermoelectric module of Anderson et al. in place of Brinkly's condenser to achieve the predictable result of condensing printing composition vapors, since both Brinkly and Anderson et al. teach different types of condensers. KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc., 82 USPQ2d 1385 (2007). It would have been further obvious to utilize the fin alignment disclosed by Azar into the invention of Brinkly as modified by Nakazawa et al. and Anderson et al. One motivation for doing so, as taught by Azar, is to allow the low pressure caused by flow bypass to draw fluid through the channels (col. 8, lines 1-9).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 27, and 30 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. Please see the above obviousness-type rejections based on the disclosures of Brinkly and Nakazawa et al. This combination discloses a printing system comprising a receptacle that is configured to collect condensate, wherein the

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receptacle is removably coupled to the printing system by an inlet that is closed when the receptacle is disconnected from the printing system.

Examiner notes Applicant's arguments in the Brief on Appeal filed 6/29/2007.

Applicant argues, regarding claims 1 and 30, that the combination of Anderson et al. and Hirabayashi et al. is not proper because the receptacle of Hirabayashi et al. is for receiving waste ink that results from cleaning of the recording head. Examiner respectfully disagrees. Anderson et al. disclose the claimed intended use for the receptacle (collecting ink vapor condensate). Hirabayashi et al. discloses a receptacle that is used to solve a similar problem of collecting waste ink. Because both receptacles are used to collect waste liquids that are accrued during printing operations, it would have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art to reference the teachings of waste ink disposal to determine proper devices and methods for discarding ink vapor condensate. This becomes further evident considering the similar compositions of each waste liquid (e.g. dirty ink from cleaning and ink solvents from vapor condensate).

Examiner would also like to note that Gaston et al. (US 6874877 B2) discloses the method of storing both ink vapor condensate and waste ink in the same receptacle (col. 2, lines 19-28). In light of this disclosure, a person of ordinary skill in the art would not only collect ink vapor condensate and waste ink similarly, but might also collect the different waste liquids together.

Communication with the USPTO

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shelby Fidler whose telephone number is (571) 272-8455. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5:00.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matthew Luu can be reached on (571) 272-7663. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Shelby Z. Fidler 8/29/07

Shelby Fidler
Patent Examiner
AU 2861



MATTHEW LUU
SUPERVISOR, PATENT EXAMINER